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ARE THERE MACCABEAN PSALMS? II.

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PSALM 74.

This Psalm has been assigned either to the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar, or to the time of the Maccabees. It has been thought by some that it refers to the time of the Persian General Bagoses (See Josephus' *Antiq.* 11: 7.) But this occupation was not accompanied by any injury to the building itself, much less by reducing it to ashes. And so critics are in general divided in opinion between the dates first mentioned.

1. *Arguments in favor of its Maccabean authorship.* The plundering of the Temple, the massacre of the citizens, and the selling of others into slavery, favor this time. Such an invasion, for instance, as when Apollonius was sent by Antiochus to punish the inhabitants on account of an uprising, 167 B. C. On this occasion the city was laid waste by fire and sword, houses were destroyed as well as the walls of the city. Several of the Temple gates were burned, and many of the apartments were razed. Thousands were slain and others were taken captive.

But this Psalm may not refer to this invasion alone, but as well to the ones which had just preceded it, when Antiochus first began to meddle in the affairs of Jerusalem.

Expressions in the Psalm which favor the Maccabean view: (1) With vv. 4-8 compare the expression in 1 Macc. 4: 38, "They saw the Sanctuary desolate, and the Altar profaned, and the gates burnt up, and shrubs growing in the courts as in the forest, or on one of the mountains; yea, and the Priests' chambers pulled down." (2) In v. 4 the "signs" were in the place where Jehovah was wont to reveal Himself. This would harmonize with the "abomination of desolation," the image which Antiochus had caused to be placed on the Altar of the Court (1 Macc. 1: 54, 59). Whatever its specific

reference may be, it is no doubt contrasted with "our signs" in vs. 9. (3) The LXX renders the expression "carved work," in v. 6, as "doors" or "gates;" this is in striking correspondence with 1 Macc. 4: 38; 2 Macc. 8: 33. Compare with these, v. 7 of the Psalm. (4) In v. 8 the "places of assembly of God" refer to the Synagogues (cf. R. V.). This indicates a late origin of the Psalm. (5) V. 9 states that Prophecy had ceased, "There is no more any prophet" (cf. 1 Macc. 4: 46; 9: 27). At the time of the Maccabees the voice of Prophecy had been silent for two hundred and fifty years. (6) In v. 20a, "Have respect unto the Covenant," refers naturally to this period. The Covenant referred to is that of Circumcision. Many were put to death for observing it. Hence this sign, which was originally a sign of God's protection, became the very opposite at this time. And so this prayer to God to remember his ancient covenant, made with His people, would be natural and fitting under these circumstances. (7) V. 20b, "For the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of violence," naturally refers to the Maccabean period. From 1 Macc. 2: 26ff, and 2 Macc. 6: 11, we learn that those who were persecuted took refuge in the mountains, but were tracked thither and slain in their hiding places, and thus those places came in reality to be 'habitations of violence.' (8) The thought of reproaching God, as found in v. 10, 18, 22, is worthy of notice. It certainly harmonizes well with the spirit of the Maccabean conflict, as it was essentially a war against the God of the Jewish people.

2. *A Consideration of the arguments for placing it in the Chaldean times.* (1) In general, it is said that there is nothing in this Psalm inconsistent with the Chaldean invasion. The desolation of Jerusalem is applicable to that event, and while certain verses (8b and 9b) favor the Maccabean period, other expressions are more in accord with the earlier period; such as v. 7, "They have set thy Sanctuary on Fire." This, it is maintained, can only refer to the destruction of the Temple by the Chaldeans, because Antiochus, although he plundered the Temple, only burnt the gates and porches of it. There was not such a complete destruction in the Maccabean period

as implied in this Psalm. (2) The expression "synagogues of God" in v. 8, being a strong point in favor of a late date, has called forth several explanations from those who oppose this view. The literal translation, as we have already noticed, is "meeting places of God (El)," and so some have referred it to the ancient Sanctuaries of the land, the high places, etc. To this the answer is given that it is hard to see how any pious Israelite would lament the destruction of these high places, because after the founding of the Central Sanctuary at Jerusalem, they became the seats of false religious worship. Nor can it refer to the Temple, as some suppose, as representing all the assemblies of God in the land, because the Temple has already been mentioned in v. 7, and this evidently refers to something different. These explanations seem unnatural and forced, in order to explain away a weighty argument in favor of a late authorship. (3) The same may be said of the expression in v. 9, "There is no more any prophet," which some try to fit into the Chaldean period. We have already noticed that it is entirely applicable to the Maccabean period. The explanations of those who would refer it to the earlier period seem very labored—such as, that the prophetic work of Jeremiah terminated with the destruction of the Temple, hence the cessation of his office gave rise to this complaint; or, that it may refer to the middle of the exile, which was devoid of prophetic utterances. These as well as others of similar purport, seem forced. If v. 8 refers to the Synagogues, v. 9 harmonizes with it, giving a like sounding lament. Compare 1 Macc. 4: 46; 9: 27; 14: 41, in which the absence of prophets is mentioned.

These are some of the chief arguments on each side of the question in reference to this Psalm. And, though we do not find every particular to fit with mathematical precision, it, nevertheless, seems far the more reasonable, from the evidence we have before us, to assign this Psalm to the Maccabean period.

But may not a different theory offer a possible solution of the question. We have seen that there are references in these Psalms, which seem to favor an earlier time than that of the Maccabees. Is there anything unreasonable in suppos-

ing that this Psalm (as well as some others, e. g., 44, 79, 83) was written at an earlier period,—perhaps Psalms 74 and 79 being originally composed at the time of the Chaldean invasion (cf. discussion above)—and that afterwards in the Maccabean struggle they were worked over and given a fresh setting, with new expressions and references in harmony with the condition of affairs at this later period? Will not this theory cover the facts, and meet the difficulties more satisfactorily than any other?

PSALM 83.

This Psalm describes a league of nations, whose object was to destroy Israel from being a nation. Some (e. g. Hupfield and De Wette) think we must regard this as a poetic description, since we have no record of any time in the history of the chosen people when all the nations here mentioned were united in a league against Israel. It is contrary to the facts of history that some of the nations here mentioned should have done so. All the enemies that Israel ever had are poetically described as rising against her at this time.

But the more general opinion is, that this Psalm serves to supplement some definite, historical event; and those of this mind are divided in their views between two dates for its composition:

a. To the events recorded in 1 Macc. 5, and Josephus' *Antiq.* 12: 8.

b. To the war of Jehoshaphat against the Edomites and surrounding nations. See 2 Chron. 20.

1. *In favor of the Maccabean period.* (1) In general it is stated that there is no period that will explain the situation so well as that recorded in 1 Macc. 5. It is recorded that after Judas had caused the altar of the Temple to be built, and the Sanctuary to be repaired, it displeased the surrounding nations, and they made a league to destroy the Israelites. It is maintained that this was at the instigation of the Syrians. (2) A difficulty arises when we consider the nations mentioned. Of the ten ethnic nations mentioned in vs. 6–8 of this Psalm, six are found included in the list of nations men-

tioned in 1 Macc. 5. The remaining four not mentioned there are the Hagarenes or Hagrites, Gebal, Amalek, and Assyria. The Hagarenes or Hagrites are mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions, also in 1 Chron. 5: 10, 19, 20; 40: 38; 27: 31. Gebal is only mentioned once in the Old Testament (Ezek. 27: 9) as the name of a city. It is mentioned in the Targums and in Josephus' *Antiq.* 2: 1, 2, as a part of Idumea. Prof. Cheyne says that "the name was applied illegitimately to a part of the south country of Judea appropriated by the Edomites." Thus these two names may have continued down to the times of the Maccabees. A greater difficulty occurs in accounting for the two remaining names. From 1 Chron. 4: 42, 43 we learn that Amalek was destroyed as a nation. This is met by saying that Amalek is mentioned here perhaps in a poetic way, as one of the old enemies of Israel, though she was at this time a subject nation. A parallel is suggested in the Book of Esther 3: 1 where Haman is represented as a descendant of Agag. The mention of the Assyrians here, also, does not harmonize with this late date, for in the time of the Maccabees Assyria no longer existed as a nation. But in 2 Kings 23: 29 (cf. Josephus' *Antiq.* 10: 5, 1), Jer. 2: 18 and Lam. 5: 6, the word is used to indicate Babylon; and in Ezra 6: 22 it is used to denote Persia. And so, it is said, why may it not as well have been applied in this connection to the Syrians (as according to some it is used in Isa. 19: 23-25; 27: 13 and Zech. 10: 11)? (3) Now when we come to apply this Psalm to the events recorded in 2 Chron. 20, in the time of Jehoshaphat, we are met with difficulties equally great, if not greater, in attempting to account for the nations. Even granting that some of these doubtful names can be accounted for at this time, there remain Amalek, Philistia, Tyre and Asshur which are not mentioned by the Chronicler in this connection.

2. *A consideration of arguments for the early date.* (1) From the subordinate position in v. 8, it is argued that this favors an early date, before Assyria had become a leading nation. In this Psalm they are described as allies of the Sons of Lot. Further, it is maintained, that even granting that the term Assyria is used to indicate the Syrians, on the supposition of

a Maccabean date, it is hard to account for the subordinate position they seem to occupy, according to the representation of this Psalm. In the Maccabean period they were leaders. But Hitzig has pointed out the fact that on at least three occasions the Syrian troops acted a subordinate part in the great struggle (1 Macc. 3: 41; 7: 39; 11: 60). (2) The nations Amalek, Philistia, Tyre and Asshur not being mentioned in 2 Chron. 20 is accounted for by saying that, though in all probability included in this league, they occupied a subordinate place in it. (3) The comparison of Jehoshaphat's prayer in 2 Chron. 20: 11 with Psalm 83: 11, and also the remark with which the narrative ends, "and the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of the countries, when they heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel" (2 Chron. 20: 29) which seems like an answer to the prayer with which this Psalm closes, have been suggested as favoring the earlier date. (4) Other arguments, such as these, that the attempt of this league was to destroy Israel as a nation, and the fact that they attempted to keep their plans secret, which have been brought forward to favor the time of Jehoshaphat, can refer equally well to the event referred to in the time of Maccabees.

These are some of the principal arguments for and against the Maccabean authorship of this Psalm. The great difficulty, as we have seen, is to account for the list of nations in either of the two periods mentioned. On the whole, it seems to favor the Maccabean period. And this view is strengthened when we compare the spirit of the Psalm (which is an important factor in deciding such a question), with the other Psalms which more probably refer to this late period.

PSALM 79.

We have now come to the last Psalm we shall consider in this connection. Critics are quite generally agreed that Psalm 79 refers to the same circumstances as are described in Psalm 74, and therefore whatever arguments go to prove the Maccabean authorship of the latter may be applied to the former. Graetz, however, while maintaining the Maccabean

authorship of Psalm 74, refers this Psalm to the time of the Chaldean invasion.

The facts of similarity of style* in both Psalms,—that they have the same Asaphic stamp, the same complaints being found in each, as to the destruction of the city and Temple, and the massacre of the servants of God; and that the general idea pervading both Psalms is suffering in behalf of one's faith,—strongly favor the inference that these two Psalms refer to the same calamity, even if not written by the same poet.

We might let the matter rest there, were it not for the fact that strong grounds have been taken against the Maccabean authorship of Psalm 79, and so the inference might be drawn, since both of these Psalms evidently refer to the same general period, and since Psalm 79 cannot be Maccabean, therefore Psalm 74 is not.

Leaving out of consideration several minor points which have little or no weight in the question, let us confine our attention to two of the more weighty objections against the Maccabean authorship of this Psalm.

1. Verses 6 and 7 of this Psalm,

Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that know thee not,
And upon the kingdoms that call not upon thy name.
For they have devoured Jacob,
And laid waste his habitation,"

are almost exactly paralleled in Jer. 10: 25. It is claimed that Jeremiah quotes from this Psalm, and not the Psalmist from Jeremiah. If so, this excludes the Maccabean authorship of this Psalm. As favoring the prior authorship of the Psalm the following points may be mentioned: (1) It is the custom of Jeremiah to quote from other writers. This by

* Comp. 79: 5, "how long . . . forever," with 74: 1, 10, "Why hast thou cast us off forever?" "How long . . . forever." Also, 79: 10, "Be known," etc., with 74: 5, "They seemed," etc. (R. V.), "made themselves known" (R. V. margin). Also, 79: 1, "The desecration of the Temple," with 74: 3, 7, "Evil . . . done in the sanctuary," "profaned the dwelling-place of thy name." Also, 79: 2, "The flesh of thy saints unto the beasts," etc., with 74: 14, 19, "meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness," "soul of thy turtle-dove unto the wild beasts." Also, 79: 12, "Their reproach, where-with they have reproached thee," with 74: 10, "How long . . . shall the adversary reproach" (cf. vs. 18, 22).

itself favors the passage in the Psalm in this connection being the original one. Jer. 10: 24 is thought to be based on Psalm 6: 1. (2) The verses in the Psalm have a more natural position than in Jeremiah. In Jer. 10: 25, the prayer that God would punish the heathen, follows immediately the complaint of his wrath burning against Israel. (3) In Psalm 79: 7 the difficult singular verb "devour" is changed into the plural in Jer. 10: 25, and this thought is expanded in the following phrases, "yea, they have devoured him and consumed him."

As favoring the prior authorship of the Jeremiah passage the following points may be noticed:* (1) It is maintained that the Jeremiah passage is not out of place in its connection, but is more definitely situated than where found in the Psalm. A contrast is expressed between the fact that God would correct his own people with judgment (i. e. in a measure), but all his fury would be poured out on his enemies. This points to the passage in Jeremiah being the original one. Others, however, do not think that the connection in Jeremiah is any closer than in the Psalm. And so they leave the question an open one as to which is the original position. (2) A much stronger point may be mentioned. If the Psalm was written before the Jeremiah passage, it must refer to the Chaldean invasion. And if so, it must have been composed after the city had been captured, as shown by the language. Now if we say that Jeremiah in this connection quotes from this Psalm, a serious difficulty arises, for in a previous part of this same chapter, the Captivity is predicted (vs. 17, 18), and this indicates that this chapter was written some time before the Psalm. This point is met by saying that the chapter in the present form was not written till after the destruction of Jerusalem. But there is no proof for this statement. While we may regard the question an open one, this last point seems

* We may leave out of consideration the question of language (which has been brought forward to show that the language in the Psalm passage is less original and elegant, than found in Jeremiah), as this is rather a doubtful method of proof. In reference to the singular verb *akal* in vs. 7 it may be well to note that the more probable explanation is the impersonal use of the verb, "one hath devoured," with which the plural might readily alternate.

to throw the balance of probability in favor of the earlier authorship of Jeremiah.

2. The second objection against the Maccabean authorship of this Psalm can now be taken up. In 1 Macc. 7: 16, 17, where is described the treacherous massacre of sixty scribes by Alcimus and Bacchides, vs. 2 and 3 of this Psalm are quoted: "Howbeit he took of them threescores men, and slew them in one day, according to the words which he wrote, 'The flesh of thy Saints have they cast out, and their blood have they shed 'round about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them.'"

Now it is asserted that the introductory formula, "according to the words which he wrote" (the Syriac inserts "the prophet"), is the common mode of quoting from the Canonical Scriptures; hence the quotation could not have been from a Psalm which had its origin in the Maccabean struggle. But this is not conclusive, for no doubt this Psalm had already been introduced into the Temple hymn-book. And further it would be quite natural for the author of 1 Maccabees to quote from a hymn, which had its origin in the events he is describing.

It is interesting to note in this connection that, according to some, another reference is found to this Psalm in 1 Maccabees 1: 37 (comp. *Psa.* 79: 1, 3). Others find a reference in the Book of Daniel to this Psalm (comp. *Dan.* 9: 16 with *Psa.* 79: 8, 4).

While this is an open question, as is that of the quotation from Jeremiah, it seems on the whole more natural to think that the quotation in 1 Macc. is from a Psalm which had its origin, at least in its present form, in this conflict.

Murray, in his "Origin and Growth of the Psalms" (pp. 124, 125), says in reference to Psalms 74 and 79. "by some they have been referred very unfitly to the period of the Chaldean invasion, but this had immediately no religious end in view, nor was, in any sense of the word, a persecution; it was a piece of political and military strategy to break the defensive power of Egypt by removing from its boundary a people who were naturally friendly to it." These words

have much weight, since they come from one who is on the whole opposed to the Maccabean theory.

Of the four Psalms considered, the date of the 83d seems the most doubtful. But it not only harmonizes better with the circumstances of this late period than any earlier one, but also with the general spirit which pervades the other Psalms, which it seems more reasonable to refer to the Maccabean times.

POST-EXILIC LEGALISM AND POST-EXILIC LITERATURE.

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In the Old Testament discussions of recent years the Psalms have not enjoyed the prominence which has been accorded the Law and the Prophets. For this there were good reasons. The new scheme of the development of the religion of the Old Testament, whatever its merits or demerits may be, is based primarily upon the readjustment of the sources as found in the Pentateuch, and secondarily, upon the bearings of the prophetic writings upon these rearranged sources. According to the new views, the Pentateuch still furnishes the leading *motif* for the unfolding of the religious ideas found in the Old Testament, although it is no longer conceded the historical priority formerly claimed for it. The Psalms, on the other hand, when contrasted with the legal and prophetical writings, did not have a primary importance or bearing upon this reconstruction of Old Testament history and religion, and as the most natural thing in the world, their closer literary and religious study was left to be done when the fundamentals and foundations of the new scheme should have been settled and fixed to the satisfaction of the builders. Recently, though, the work of adjusting the Psalms also to the accepted ideas of Old Testament criticism and theology